

**Epi Update for Friday, September 28, 2018**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Cases of West Nile virus continue to increase**
- **Monkeypox: Lab safety reminder, SHL available for testing**
- **The Antimicrobial Resistance Challenge**
- **September 28 is World Rabies Day**
- **In the news: Louisville doctor using maggots to treat patients**
- **In the news: What sparked an *E. coli* outbreak in lettuce? Scientists trace a surprising source**
- **In the news: How smallpox claimed its final victim**
- **Infographic: Stay healthy around small pets**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

**Cases of West Nile virus continue to increase**

Across Iowa, there are currently 99 cases of West Nile virus that have been confirmed or are under investigation, the highest number of cases since 2003. Providers should continue to consider this diagnosis and Iowans should continue to use insect repellent, long sleeves and pants (this is especially important between dawn and dusk when mosquitos are most active).

For more information about West Nile virus in Iowa, visit [www.idph.iowa.gov/cade/vectorborne-illness](http://www.idph.iowa.gov/cade/vectorborne-illness).

**Monkeypox: Lab safety reminder, SHL available for testing**

Two travelers in the UK were recently diagnosed with monkeypox. Monkeypox is caused by a virus in the *Orthopoxvirus* genus, a relative of smallpox. Clinical presentation is similar to other pox viruses, including fever, headache, malaise and the typical smallpox-like vesicular rash. There is an ongoing outbreak of monkeypox throughout several African nations. However, diseases can travel long distances very quickly today. For example, in 2003 there was an outbreak of monkeypox in the U.S. originating from the bite of a pet prairie dog in Wisconsin.

These events serve as important reminders for hospitals and clinics to continue to ask patients about recent travel and consider diagnosis that might be uncommon in Iowa, but found in other states and countries. Laboratory staff should always use proper biosafety practices to reduce the likelihood of an exposure to any specimen that might contain an infectious agent. If an unusual agent is suspected, laboratory staff should work in a biosafety cabinet using appropriate PPE and best safety practices. Remember to use an effective disinfectant to decontaminate laboratory surfaces and wash your hands thoroughly.

If you suspect a patient has an unusual infectious disease, like monkeypox, please contact IDPH at 800-362-2736 during business hours and 515-323-4360 after hours. SHL is capable of performing testing for monkeypox and other pox viruses in collaboration with IDPH and CDC.

For more information about monkeypox, visit [www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html).

### **The Antimicrobial Resistance Challenge**

The Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Challenge was officially kicked off at the United Nations General Assembly on September 25. It is a year-long global effort led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to fight against antimicrobial resistance. Across the globe, governments, private industry and organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are making a commitment to combat antimicrobial resistance with specific actions that fall under at least one of five “commitment areas”:

- Tracking and data - Share data and improve data collection
- Infection prevention and control - Reduce the spread of resistant organisms
- Antibiotic use - Improve appropriate antibiotic use
- Environment and sanitation - Decrease antibiotics and resistance in the environment, including improving sanitation
- Vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics - Invest in development and improved access

The challenge encourages a One Health approach, recognizing that the health of people is connected to the health of animals and the environment.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/intl-activities/amr-challenge.html](http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/intl-activities/amr-challenge.html).

### **September 28 is World Rabies Day**

Although rabies is preventable via proper post-exposure prophylaxis, more than 59,000 people worldwide die from the disease each year. Thankfully, due in large part to vaccinating pets and receiving proper care following a potential rabies exposure, cases in the U.S. are relatively rare.

Rabies is nearly 100 percent fatal, so any potential human exposure is a serious concern. IDPH has several rabies resources available on our website, with pages specifically geared towards health care providers, veterinarians and the public. As always, IDPH is available for rabies consultation 24/7/365 - call 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 outside of business hours.

For more information about World Rabies Day, visit [www.cdc.gov/worldrabiesday/](http://www.cdc.gov/worldrabiesday/).

For rabies resources available from IDPH, visit [idph.iowa.gov/rabies](http://idph.iowa.gov/rabies).

### In the news: Louisville doctor using maggots to treat patients

[www.wdrb.com/story/38914409/louisville-doctor-using-maggots-to-treat-patients](http://www.wdrb.com/story/38914409/louisville-doctor-using-maggots-to-treat-patients)

### In the news: What sparked an *E. coli* outbreak in lettuce? Scientists trace a surprising source

[www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/08/29/642646707/investigators-track-contaminated-lettuce-outbreak-to-a-cattle-feedlot](http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/08/29/642646707/investigators-track-contaminated-lettuce-outbreak-to-a-cattle-feedlot)

### In the news: How smallpox claimed its final victim

[www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-45101091](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-45101091)

### Infographic: Stay healthy around small pets



To view in full size, visit

[www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/safety-around-small-pets-H.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/resources/safety-around-small-pets-H.pdf).

### Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

### Have a healthy and happy week!

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